

REMARKS

Status of Claims

Claims 2, 3, and 5 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph for using the term “such as”. Applicant has amended these claims to replace this language. Applicants believe these rejections are therefore overcome.

Claim 4 stands rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph for using the term “such as”. Applicants were unable to find this, and therefore believe this rejection is in error. If the Examiner has further concerns, Applicants request clarification from the Examiner.

Claims 1-18 stand rejected under 35 USC §112, second paragraph for an apparent ambiguity as to the subject of the claims. Applicants have amended the claim to clarify the siding system as the subject of the claims. Accordingly, Applicants submit these rejections have been overcome.

Claims 1-5, 9, 11, 15-16 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Chubb ‘060. Applicants claim, in part:

a body for attachment to the siding strip for at least partially covering the exposed portion of the wall, said body including an integral fastener for engaging the first receiver in the siding strip and an opening having a predetermined shape and size for receiving the first portion of the utility-related structure.

Applicants submit that Chubb, as noted in the Examiner’s comments, attach a plate 12 to the building, and not to the siding strip, as claimed by Applicants. As claimed, Applicants include an integral fastener for engaging the first receiver in the siding strip, which is not shown or suggested by Chubb, which attaches the cover 12 to the building with nails N, as described at column 2, lines 36-40. As such, Chubb has gaps between the cover and the siding, as viewed in Fig. 3, whereas Applicants have a body that attaches to the siding and does not have the unsightly appearance provided by Chubb.

Claims 6-8, 10, 12-14, 17-18 stand rejected under 35 §103 as being unpatentable over Chubb in view of Cornelius and Jurvis ‘580. Applicants respectfully submit that the references

fail to teach, alone or in combination, at least the limitations described in the preceding paragraph. These, or similar, limitations are found in independent claims 1, 12, and 15, from which the rejected dependent claims depend. Accordingly, Applicants submit that this rejection has been overcome.

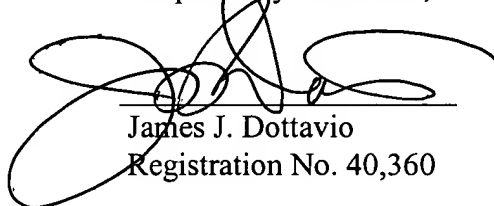
Claims 19-23 stand rejected under 35 §103 as being unpatentable over Chubb in view of Cornelius and Jurvis '580. Applicants respectfully submit that the references fail to teach, alone or in combination, at least the limitations described in the preceding two paragraphs. These, or similar, limitations are found in independent claim 19 from which the rejected dependent claims depend. Accordingly, Applicants submit that this rejection has been overcome.

Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims are in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the rejections is requested. Allowance of claims 1-23 at an early date is solicited. If any questions should arise with respect to the above Remarks, or if the Examiner has any comments or suggestions to place the claims in better condition for allowance, it is requested that the Examiner contact Applicant's attorney at the number listed below.

Applicant authorizes any fees required pertaining to this response be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-0568.

Respectfully submitted,



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Version showing changes made

1. (Amended) In a siding system including at least one siding strip having a first receiver, said siding strip partially covering an external wall of a building or dwelling, a component for intended use in covering at least an exposed portion of the wall and receiving a first portion of a utility-related structure, said siding system comprising:

a body for attachment [adjacent] to the siding strip for at least partially covering the exposed portion of the wall, said body including an integral fastener for engaging the first receiver in the siding strip and an opening having a predetermined shape and size for receiving the first portion of the utility-related structure.

2. (Amended) The component according to claim 1, wherein an engagement surface surrounds the opening in the body, said engagement surface being substantially planar for at least partially engaging a second portion of the utility-related structure, [such as] said structure comprising a mounting tab for a socket, a face plate, or a cover.

3. (Amended) The component according to claim 1, wherein an engagement surface surrounds the opening in the body, said engagement surface being substantially parallel to the wall for at least partially engaging a second portion of the utility-related structure, [such as] said structure comprising a mounting tab for a socket, a face plate, or a cover.

5. (Amended) The component according to claim 1, wherein the body further includes at least one hole adjacent to the opening for receiving a non-integral fastener for assisting in securing a second utility-related structure, [such as] said structure comprising a face plate or cover, to the body.

12. (Amended) In a siding system including at least one siding strip having a profile that is outwardly bowed to simulate the appearance of a log or timber, said siding strip partially covering an external wall of a building or dwelling, a component for intended use in covering at least an exposed portion of the wall a utility-related structure, said siding system comprising:

a body for attachment [adjacent] to the siding strip for at least partially covering the exposed portion of the wall, said body also having a profile that is outwardly bowed relative to a vertical plane to simulate the appearance of a log or timber and an opening having a predetermined shape and size for receiving the utility-related structure.

15. (Amended) A siding system for at least partially covering an external wall of a dwelling or building and receiving a portion of a utility-related structure, said siding system comprising:

at least one siding strip fastened to and covering at least a portion of the wall, said siding strip including at least one receiver;

a component for attachment adjacent to the [wall] siding strip for covering at least a portion [thereof] of the wall left exposed by the at least one siding strip, said component including an integral fastener for engaging the receiver of the at least one siding strip and an opening having a predetermined size and shape for receiving the utility-related structure.

19. (Amended) A method for at least partially covering an external wall of a building or dwelling and assisting in supporting a utility-related structure adjacent to a siding strip including a first receiver, comprising in any order:

securing a component adjacent to the [wall] siding strip by placing a first integral fastener of the component in the first receiver of the siding strip, said component at least partially covering an exposed portion of the wall;

forming an opening having a predetermined shape and size in the component for receiving a first portion of the utility-related structure; and

passing the first portion of the utility-related structure through the opening.